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Ipswich, Mass. South Church records, 1747-1868. RG5298

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English

DACS2 - 2013

Congregational Library & Archives

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Summary Information

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| Repository: | Congregational Library & Archives |
| Creator: | South Church (Ipswich, Mass.) |
| Title: | Ipswich, Mass. South Church records, 1747-1868. |
| ID: | RG5298 |
| Date [bulk]: | 1747-1868 |
| Physical Description: | 2 Volumes |
| Language of the Material: | English |
| Abstract: | The South Church in Ipswich, Massachusetts, was formally gathered in 1747 following ministerial angst between Ipswich's two ministers and a petition by parishioners in southern Ipswich who felt traveling to the First Church was too difficult. The first meeting house was completed in 1748 and construction on the second meeting house was completed in 1838. In 1922 the South Church rejoined the First Church to become the First and South Congregational Church. The South Church records document the history of the church through collected vital member records, church and parish meeting minutes, committee reports, and financial records. |

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], in the Ipswich, Mass. South Church records, 1747-1868. RG5298. The Congregational Library & Archives, Boston, MA.

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Historical Note

The initial plan to create a new church "South side of the river" in Ipswich, Massachusetts, dates to a petition presented to the First Church in Ipswich in 1725. The primary reason cited in the petition for the creation of a south meeting house was the long and difficult travel parishioners in southern Ipswich had to overcome in order to attend the First Church. The Parish voted to allow for construction of a south meeting house; however, this did not come to pass, apparently, in part, because one of the two employed ministers, Rev. John Rogers, was quite popular.

Calls for separation did not resume until 1746, shortly after the death of John Rogers in December, 1745. In 1746 a new petition for the creation of a south meeting house was presented to the First Parish. The new petition, beyond citing the geographic distance between communities, cited the fact that by 1746 the First Church meetinghouse was physically too small to comfortably accommodate the whole parish. Initially this petition was voted down. In 1746, Rev. John Walley was invited to become the second minister of the First Church to replace John Rogers. The first minister, Rev. Nathaniel Rogers and Rev. Walley did not get along well. When the disagreements between the two ministers became public, the First Parish voted to allow for the formation of a south meeting house and parish in large part to deescalate the feud between the two ministers. In 1747 the South Church was formally gathered and Rev. John Walley was installed as the first minister of the new church. Construction on the South Meeting House began in 1747 and was completed in the spring of 1748.

In 1838, the second meeting house of the South Church was constructed. Rev. Thomas F. Waters, minister of the South Church from 1879-1919, organized the Ipswich Historical Society. In 1899 the church steeple was struck by lightning; while the church building survived the subsequent fire, the original bell did not. A new bell was secured by Elizabeth M. Brown in honor of her late husband, William G. Brown.

In 1922 the South Church, whose membership had waned significantly in the twentieth-century, reformed with the First Church to form the First and South Congregational Church of Ipswich, Massachusetts. The South Church Meeting House was repurposed as the Parish House and served as that function until it was destroyed by fire in 1977. Only the bell survived the fire. The church lot was converted into a small park and the bell was repurposed into a memorial within the park. The First and South Congregational Church, now simply First Church, still serves the Ipswich community today.

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Scope and Contents

The South Church records document the history church and parish through collected member records, meeting minutes, committee reports, and financial records. Included in the collection are marriage records, baptismal records, records of deaths, membership lists, records detailing relations with the First Church, burial grounds records, and records related to music during church services.

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Arrangement

This collection is arranged chronologically by end date.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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info@14beacon.org

URL: <http://www.CongregationalLibrary.org>

Revision Description

Zachary Bodnar: Revised finding aid instances, notes, agents, title fields, and subjects using the current implementation of the processing manual. 2019-05-30

Restrictions on Access

Access to this collection is unrestricted and open to the public.

Restrictions on Use

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Acquisition Information

Materials were temporarily loaned to the Congregational Library & Archives, October 2015, by the First Church in Ipswich; Accession 2015-19.

Location of Originals

The original volumes are currently held by the First Church in Ipswich, Massachusetts, UCC.

Accruals

Additional accruals are expected for this collection in the form of full-text transcription. There is no anticipated date for this accrual.

Processing Information

Processed by Marya Shotkoski, October 2015, using DACS Second Edition. Additional processing and description by Zachary Bodnar, November 2017, using DACS Second Edition.

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Related Materials

Related Materials

The Congregational Library & Archives has digitized materials from the First Church in Ipswich and made [them available to view online](#).

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Controlled Access Headings

- Baptismal records.
- Church records and registers.
- Installation (clergy).
- Marriage records.
- Music in churches.
- Necrologies.
- New England's Hidden Histories.
- Pews and pew rights.
- Ipswich (Mass.) -- Church history.
- South Church (Ipswich, Mass.)

Technical Requirements

To access digital user's copies via online-interface a java-enabled web browser is required. Internet Explorer 8.x and later, Firefox 5.x and alter, Opera 12 and later, Safari 5.x and later, or any version of Google Chrome are recommended.

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Bibliography

Water, Thomas Franklin. *An Historical Address delivered on the 140th Anniversary of the Organization of the South Church, Ipswich, Sunday, July 31, 1887*. Ipswich: South Church, 1887. 17.11.1 I68.7 FrC

Harris, Gordon. "South Congregational Church: Only the Bell Remains." Last modified February 6, 2019. <https://historicipswich.org/2019/02/06/south-church/>.

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Collection Inventory

| Title/Description | Instances |
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South Parish Book of Records, 1747-1851

Digital Copies:

Digital Copies

These church records were digitized as part of the New England's Hidden Histories project. Digital reproductions are [available to view online](#).

Scope and Contents

This volume contains the church history of the South Parish from 1747 to 1851 and includes the minutes of parish meetings and records of votes. Included within the records are pew deeds and pew chart, the development of the meeting house, payments to church officials and minister salaries, church appointments, their relationship with the First Church, committee records, parish affairs, burial grounds records, taxes collections, and the question of music in the church.

South Parish record book, 1747-1868

Digital Copies:

Digital Copies

These church records were digitized as part of the New England's Hidden Histories project. Digital reproductions are [available to view online](#).

Scope and Contents

This volume is largely a church history of the South Parish from 1747 to 1868 and includes the South Parish covenant from 1747 as well as other founding documents. Additional records include parish meeting minutes, vital statistics such as births, baptisms, admissions, and marriages along with deaths, arranged by year, and membership lists by gender.